

The Committee for the Free World

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January 4, 1982

Dear Friend:

Enclosed is the text of an ad which is to be run in the Sunday, January 10th edition of the New York Times. Since we felt that this issue was such an urgent one, and since your barrage of letters and telephone calls to the office in the last week indicated to us that you felt the same, we decided not to go through the terribly time-consuming process of attempting to secure signatures; instead, the ad will simply appear in the name of the Committee for the Free World.

We are, however, eager to have your signature on this statement for future use as the document is to be presented to the White House, or to be circulated in Europe, or whatever. Therefore, if you endorse this statement please sign the coupon and return it to us. Naturally, if you were able to make some contribution toward the cost of this ad, we would be very grateful. But in any case please do lend us your name.

Sincerely,

Midge Decter
Midge Decter
Executive Director

MD/jhr
Enclosure.

Poland: Choosing Sides

There are moments in the affairs of men when, however reluctantly, they must choose between stark and simple alternatives. There are moments in the affairs of men when they find themselves, however uncomfortably, on one side of an issue or the other. This is such a moment.

The Polish people have for the past year been saying no to totalitarian tyranny. They have demanded no more than certain of the elementary freedoms that Western citizens enjoy without thinking about it every day of their lives. They have advanced this demand peaceably, bravely, and against incredible odds. Now the Soviet Union and its Polish puppets have answered—with the brutality and mendacity that have ever been the hallmark of totalitarian governance.

In the face of these developments, the West confronts a simple choice: whether to collude with or to oppose the despots who are trying to crush the Polish struggle for freedom.

Hardly anyone openly advocates collusion with the Polish government and the Soviet Union, but collusion can take many disguised and indirect forms. It can take the form of the idea (particularly popular in West Germany) that in the absence of an outright Soviet invasion, there is no reason to hold the Soviet Union responsible for the repression in Poland and to act against it accordingly. It can also take the form of the statement that Solidarity is to blame for having gone "too far," and that only if the "experiment" of General Jaruzelski succeeds can Poland be rescued from a bloody Soviet invasion. Most concretely of all, collusion can take the form of continued or even increased economic aid to Poland and the Soviet Union.

In all these ways the West in effect rewards the Soviet Union for allowing the Quisling government in Poland to crush Solidarity instead of doing the job itself. And the Quislings in Poland are rewarded for winning the war against their own people.

Whatever form it takes, Western complicity in the war against the Polish people will be a confession of our intellectual confusion and our moral and political bankruptcy. In helping to stabilize the situation in Poland—and therefore in the Soviet empire generally—we will in effect be declaring to the world that the freedom which has been the glory and touchstone of our own civilization must remain forever beyond the reach of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

Is this what the West wishes to say?

There are those who tell us that the only alternative to such a declaration is the risk of war with the Soviet Union. The Committee for the Free World believes that this idea is in itself a form of accommodation with Soviet totalitarianism. We believe that there is an alternative that does not involve military force. *It is simply the refusal to collude—and this means refusing any and all help to the forces of repression in Moscow and Warsaw.*

The mighty efficiency of totalitarianism in bringing whole populations under the sway of its terror does not extend to making them productive. Both Poland and the Soviet Union desperately need Western loans, Western grain, and above all Western technology. By denying them access to all three we could, at no risk of military confrontation, further the processes of disintegration from within that may mark the beginning of the end of the Soviet empire.

For this, and nothing less, is the meaning of the crisis in Poland, and it is this that shapes the choices the West is now forced to make.

One choice is to persist in the illusions of detente according to which stabilizing the Soviet empire is in the interests of the West and will also lead eventually to liberalization in the East. Even as these illusions are being shattered by the events in Poland, they are being freshly urged upon us by many in the West who are blinded by fear or by the lure of profits. Some even say that the West should use economic pressure to force the Polish government to restore the freedoms it has now taken away. But is it not absurd to believe that the Soviet Union and the Polish government have crushed Solidarity and all that it represents in order to allow it to rise again?

The other choice for the West is to recognize the illusions of detente for what they are and to seize the historic opportunity now presented by the Polish crisis to hasten the day when the world will be free of Soviet imperialism and the totalitarian barbarisms it carries in its wake.

Once again, as so often before, we in the West are being given a lesson in the meaning of freedom by those who live under Communist rule. Their fate, and ultimately our own ability to maintain ourselves as free societies, will be determined by our response.

The Committee for the Free World

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To: The Committee for the Free World
211 East 51st Street
New York, NY 10022

I wish to endorse the statement "Poland: Choosing Sides"

Signature _____

Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____ toward the work of the Committee (all contributions are tax-deductible).

Name _____

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Please Print _____